TOPIC 4 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

ENABLING OBJECTIVES:

- 4.1 **IDENTIFY** effective listening techniques.
- 4.2 **IDENTIFY** effective writing techniques.

ALLOTTED TIME:

2.0 hours

STUDENT PREPARATION:

- A. Student Support Material:
 - 1. Student Guide, NAVEDTRA 38202-B (1 per student)
- B. Reference Publications: None

INSTRUCTOR PREPARATION:

- A. Review related student material.
- B. Reference Publication: None

C. Supplemental References:

These readings are suggested as additional sources of information. Although not required, you are encouraged to review them to broaden your perspective of the lesson.

- 1. SECNAVINST 5216.5 (Series) <u>Department of</u> the Navy Correspondence Manual
- 2. Shenk, R. (1997) <u>The Naval Institute Guide to Naval Writing</u>. Annapolis, MD; Naval Institute Press.
- E. Training Materials Required:
 - 1. From Student Guide:
 - a. TS 4 Communication Skills
 - b. OS 4-1 Communication Skills
 - c. ES 4-2 Listening Skills
 - d. ES 4-3 Listening Skills Self Assessment

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- e. IS 4-4 Listening Barriers
- f. IS 4-5 Just Plain English
- 2. Transparencies:
 - a. TP 4-1 Communication Skills
 - b. TP 4-2 Enabling Objectives
 - c. TP 4-3 Oral Communication Transcript
 - d. TP 4-4 Communication Process
 - e. TP 4-5 Five Skills to Improve Listening
 - f. TP 4-6 Effective Writing Steps
- 3. Video Tapes: None

1. Introduction

As a Chief Petty officer, your overall effectiveness in the chain of command is primarily based on your ability to communicate. This ability consists of good listening, speaking, writing and reading habits. The objective of this lesson is to familiarize you with the basic skills necessary to listen, speak and write effectively.

2. Listening Exercise

1. **Display** TP 4-1, Communication Skills.

Display TP 4-2, Enabling Objectives.

Refer to TS 4, Communication Skills, and review the enabling objectives.

2. **Tell** the students you are going to read them a very short story and you want them to listen very carefully.

Read the following:

The parent looked through the window and saw his child pulled up in the front of the house. A few seconds later, the parent heard, "I'm shot, I'm shot!" Just then, the frightened child walked into the home. It was exactly 4 p.m. when, "I need help, I need help," was heard. Maintaining calmness and composure, the parent calmed the child down, and the police station was called. In five minutes, a blue car arrived, his uncle, and later the ambulance arrived too.

After reading the story to the students refer students to ES 4-2 and direct them to respond to the statements.

Ask the students to indicate by a show of hands if each statement is true or false.

Note: There is no evidence that <u>any</u> of the statements are true. However, initial interpretation for many listeners is that many of these statements are supported.

Display TP 4-3, Oral Communications Transcript, to justify that the correct response is false.

Explain that the purpose of this activity was to help students understand how often comprehension errors can occur.

3. Communication Process

Many of you have seen this depiction before. The process consists of a message being sent and received. It can be verbal or nonverbal.

Communication does not always flow accurately from sender to receiver. It is important to identify and remove barriers to effective communication. A barrier is anything that interferes with the communication process. It can be physical or psychological.

Facilitate a discussion that focuses on the reasons for differences in the true/false responses the students provided. Use the following questions, if necessary:

How will two or more listeners hear the same story and develop different perceptions?

How would the ability to ask questions or ask for repetition help in your comprehension?

How does a speaker's feeling affect the content of the message?

3. **Show** TP 4-4, Communication Process.

Question: What are some of the communication barriers you have encountered and what did you do to eliminate them?

Possible answers:

Cultural, educational, or experience differences

Noise, distance, distractions

4. Effective Listening

The communication skill of listening is something that we often take for granted. We don't receive much training in listening, but with practice, we can improve our listening skills.

One of the first steps is to assess how well we listen.

Refer students to ES 4-3 and allow them 10 minutes to complete the assessment.

Discuss results of the assessment with the students.

Question: What are some bad listening habits?

Possible answers:

Preaching

Judging

Giving false praise

Distracting

Filtering

5. Five skills that will help improve your listening skills.

Attend

Acknowledge

Invite

Summarize

Ask

- a. Attend looking, listening, tracking
 - Give full attention by listening
 - Stop further activity which might be distracting
 - Turn body towards the person who is speaking
 - Give eye contact if possible
 - In general, we are putting our concerns aside for the moment and giving the other person "the floor"
 - As we listen we take in as much as we can
 - Look at the nonverbal
 - Listen to the sounds
 - Notice what the other person discloses

5. **Display** TP 4-5, Five Skills to Improve Listening.

- b. Acknowledge showing interest and respect for what others say.
 - To acknowledge may mean a nod, an "uhhuh," or making an interpretive statement
 - In listening, the key information at any moment is where the other person's energy is, not where yours is

- c. Invite more information
 - For this skill, you simply say or do something that encourages the other person to continue talking spontaneously

Question: What are some examples of how you acknowledge a person who is speaking?

Possible answers:

"That sounds important."

"I can see you are really concerned."

"That idea must be really exciting."

"I guess you don't really want to go."

Question: What are some ways that you can encourage someone to continue talking?

Possible answers:

"Tell me more."

"Say more about that."

"I'd like to hear more about what you are saying."

"What else can you tell me?"

- d. Summarize to ensure accuracy. This skill helps you ensure understanding.
 - If we say "I understand what you are saying" that may be untrue or sound arrogant.
 - Summarize the message to demonstrate you accurately understand.

How to summarize:

- Repeat in your own words what you think you heard the speaker say.
- Don't add or subtract from the message.
- Ask the person talking for confirmation.

- e. Ask open questions to gather or fill in missing information.
 - Open questions begin with "W" and "H" (Who, What, Where, When, How).
 - Open questions are the most effective kinds of questions.
 - Closed questions limit or attempt to direct responses.
 - Avoid "Why" questions.

Question: What are some examples of how to summarize?

Possible answers:

"I'd like to run back what you have just said to make sure that I have it."

"You said you are feeling frustrated about...is that it?

6. Listening Barriers

7. Effective Writing

As a newly selected Chief Petty Officer, you should learn to excel in writing. You will be tasked with preparing letters, messages, memorandums, evaluations, and instructions. A Chief Petty Officer whose writing needs little revision is an asset to the Division Officer, Department Head and Executive Officer. Your skills as a writer will be scrutinized by seniors and subordinates alike and will affect the way you are perceived as a leader.

The following six steps will help you prepare written communication and a speech outline more effectively.

Step 1: Analyze Purpose and Audience

Is your purpose to direct, inform (or question), or to persuade? The purpose determines what you should emphasize. <u>Directive</u> emphasizes what to do, <u>informative</u> highlights how, <u>persuasive</u> focuses on the way something should be done.

6. **Refer** students to IS 4-4. Go over information and exercise questions with the students as a class.

Examples: E-mails, memos, etc.

Display TP 4-6, Effective Writing Steps.

You also need to identify your specific objective. What do you want to happen as a result of the communication?

After you sort out the purpose, think about the audience on both the receiving and sending end.

Here are some questions to consider:

- Am I promising something I can deliver?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- Am I consistent with previous policy?
- What tone is appropriate?
- How much does the audience already know about the subject?

Step 2: Conduct Research

The objective is to either solve a problem or determine if a problem exists. As you research, be aware of your own biases. Use important data even if it conflicts with your philosophy.

Step 3: Support your ideas

Use sources of information that back up your arguments such as:

- Examples
- Statistics
- Testimony
- Comparisons

Step 4: Organize your writing

Effective writing consists of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The introduction captures the reader's interest and announces the purpose of the communication. The body presents your ideas in proper sequence. The conclusion summarizes the main points stated in the body and provides a smooth ending.

Step 5: Write and edit a first draft

Use your outline as a guide. Here are some things to remember as you prepare the first draft:

- Avoid mystery stories
- Put the one most important sentence in by the end of the first paragraph
- Rely on everyday words
- Eliminate wordiness
- Write actively

Step 6: Receive feedback from others

Read your draft several times. Take a detached approach and be critical of your writing. When you have done everything possible to improve your draft, have someone such as a fellow Chief or your Division Officer review your work.

Refer students to IS 4-5, Just Plain English in the Student Guide and allow them a few minutes to get the feel for the type of information it provides. Suggest to students that the information sheet contains useful information they may wish to refer to when drafting correspondence. Also advise students that they should use the Navy Correspondence Manual to ensure format is correct.

Note: The Naval Correspondence Course on the Navy E-Learning Network will familiarize you with the Navy Correspondence Manual.

Tell your reviewer you want a critical evaluation of your work and would appreciate suggestions for improvement. Accept whatever criticism without arguing or defending yourself. Decide how you can use the comments to improve your writing.

8. References

- a. SECNAVINST 5216.5 Series, DoN Correspondence Manual
- b. Naval Institute Guide to Naval Writing
- c. BUPERSINST 1610.10 Series, Navy Performance Evaluation and Counseling System
- d. SECNAVINST 1650 Series, Navy and Marine Corps Awards Manual

9. Summary

The ability to communicate is a skill; like other skills, this ability is increased through hard work and practice. The information presented in this topic is a review of the fundamentals required for effective communication.

Your job as a Chief Petty Officer depends on how well you communicate. The ability to present your thoughts and ideas indicates to others you can accept greater responsibility.

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